

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, MY

SUBJECT: INQUIRY INTO DETENTION OF SYED HUSIN ALI,
ONG LOONG SHENG, AND LENG HENG SIEW

REF: A) SNYDER-BENNETT LETTER 1/24/78; B) NATHAN-ROSENTHAL LETTER 2/12/77; C) KUALA LUMPUR 3533 (77),
D) 77 STATE 147326, E) 77 STATE 082165, F) STATE 0290
(EXDIS)

1. DEPARTMENT IS FORWARDING BY POUCH CORRESPONDENCE
INQUIRING ABOUT THE CONTINUED DETENTION BY THE GOM OF
DR. SYED HUSIN ALI (LETTER FROM DR. CLIVE S. KESSLER OF
BARNARD COLLEGE) AND LENG (OR LEM OR LIM) HENG SIEW
(LETTER FROM DANIEL FINLAY OF THE ITHACA CHAPTER OF
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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL). IT HAS RECEIVED COPY OF LETTER
TO DCM ROSENTHAL FROM DR. ANDREW J. NATHAN OF COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY REGARDING ONG LOONG SHENG (AKA NG FENG HUAM)
(REF. A).

2. SYED HUSIN ALI, A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER OF THE
PARTI SOSIALIS RAKYAT MALAYSIA AND UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR, HAS BEEN DETAINED SINCE FEBRUARY 1976; THEREFORE HIS TWO-YEAR DETENTION ORDER CAME UP FOR

REVIEW THIS MONTH AND HE ALREADY MAY HAVE BEEN RELEASED. ACCORDING TO MATERIAL FROM PSRM AND DAP'S FAN YEW TENG FORWARDED WITH KESSLER'S LETTER TO ASST. SECRETARY DERIAN, SYED HUSIN WAS BEING HELD AT KAMUNTING DETENTION CAMP, TAIPING, UNDER HARSH CONDITIONS. EARLIER HE ALLEGEDLY WAS DETAINED IN VIRTUAL SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR SEVEN MONTHS WHILE HE WAS INTERROGATED IN KUALA LUMPUR BY RMP SPECIAL BRANCH. AN APPARENT COPY OF HIS DETENTION ORDER FORWARDED BY KESSLER INCLUDES A STATEMENT UNDER SECTION 11(2)(B) OF THE ISA ACCUSING SYED HUSIN OF VARIOUS HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST THE GOM INCLUDING PREACHING "CLASS STRUGGLE" TO MEMBERS OF THE NOW OUTLAWED UM SOCIALIST CLUB AND CONDUCTING A POLITICAL COURSE FOR PSRM MEMBERS "DURING WHICH ANTI-GOVT. SENTIMENTS WERE DISSEMINATED." THE FINAL CHARGE IS THAT HE PUBLICLY PLEDGED FULL SUPPORT FOR "ILLEGAL VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS" BY UM STUDENTS IN DECEMBER 1974.

2. AS EMBASSY AWARE, ONG IS CHARGED WITH CARRYING OUT "UNITED FRONT WORK" FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF MALAYA AT NANYANG UNIVERSITY IN SINGAPORE, FROM WHICH HE WAS DEPARTED TO MALAYSIA (OCTOBER 1973), AND WHILE ACTING AS AN ORGANIZER FOR THE NOW OUTLAWED UNITED MALAYAN ESTATE

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WORKERS' UNION IN MALAYSIA. THERE IS LITTLE DATA ON LENG, BUT FINLAY ASSERTS THAT NO INFORMATION HAS BEEN ADVANCED TO PROVE THAT HE IS A COMMUNIST.

3. DEPARTMENT HAS CHECKED ITS AND OTHER AGENCY FILES ON ONG AND LEM AND FOUND NOTHING. SYED HUSIN ALI IS, OF COURSE, WELL KNOWN BOTH AS A MUSLIM ACADEMIC AND AS A CRITIC OF THE GOM AND THE MALAYSIAN ELITE. HOWEVER, WE HAVE ALMOST NO INFORMATION HERE REGARDING HIS PRESENT SITUATION. WE CANNOT, THEREFORE, REPLY KNOWLEDGEABLY TO THESE INQUIRIES AND, OF COURSE, THERE IS AN OBLIGATION UNDER PRESENT EXECUTIVE BRANCH POLICY AND CONGRESSIONAL MANDATES TO INQUIRE INTO THE EXTENT AND CONDITIONS OF DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL AS CURRENTLY EXIST IN MALAYSIA. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED, THEREFORE, TO APPROACH THE GOM AT AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL TO SEEK THIS INFORMATION.

4. ACTION. PLEASE REPORT THE GOM'S REACTION AND ANY INFORMATION YOU MAY BE ABLE TO GATHER ON DETENTION CONDITIONS THROUGH NGO'S (SUCH AS THE BAR ASSOCIATION) SO THAT WE CAN REPLY TO THE INQUIRIES WE HAVE RECEIVED. DEPARTMENT IS ACKNOWLEDGING KESSLER AND FINLAY'S LETTERS

AND WILL INFORM NATHAN THAT WE ARE LOOKING INTO ONG'S
CASE. VANCE

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